Allocation of gas to Andhra Pradesh

819. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation has discovered a large amount of natural gas reserves recently in Krishna-Godavari Basin No. 17 in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details of the discovery such as estimated quantity of gas in terms of TCF discovered in KG basins;

(c) whether some gas is going to be allocated to the State of Andhra Pradesh to meet its requirements by the GSPC; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Gujarat Petroleum Corporation has reported discovery of hydrocarbons recently in the Krishna-Godavari Basin in its 4th well KG#17 in the block KG-OSN-2001/3.

(b) The estimated quantity of gas can only be known after appraisal of the discovery by the Contractor in terms of the Production Sharing Contract.

(c) and (d) Under the PSC, the contractor has freedom to sell the gas produced.

MoU with UK Universities in petroleum sector

820. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have signed MoUs with leading UK universities to meet R & D needs of its petroleum industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the action plan of Government to step-up exploration momentum in the energy sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) The

Directorate General of Hydrocarbons on behalf of Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with two UK Institutes *viz.* Imperial College, London and University of Aberdeen, U.K. on the 7th April, 2006, for specific R&D areas in Geology and Geophysics. These MOUs provide for an umbrella framework under which Indian companies/DGH may identify areas of expertise with these Institutions, which are of interest to India.

(c) The Action Plan of the Government to step up exploration in the country includes:—

- The New Exploration Licensing Policy under which 55 blocks are on offer for exploration and production activities under the sixth round, the bids for which will open on the 15th September, 2006.
- The Coal Bed Methane Policy under which 54 bids have been received for undertaking exploration and production activities in 10 blocks under the third round.
- Besides their, ONGC and OIL are already undertaking exploration activities in these nomination acreages.
- Continous review of exploration policy to encourage private/ MNCs and public companies for increase participation in E&P sector.
- Upgrading the geo-scientific knowledge/date base of sedimentary areas through extensive surveys especially in unexplored/poorly explored areas.
- Carving out of more & more blocks for offer under future NELP and CBM rounds.

Imposition of taxes on ethanol products

821. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some State Governments have started to impose various taxes on ethanol products and in this regard some oil companies have made protest against these taxes; and